

What is claimed is:

1. A memory card reading/writing apparatus that is capable of accessing data recorded on a memory card and comprising:
  - a memory unit operable to store apparatus-user information that identifies the user of said memory card reading/writing apparatus;
  - 5 an apparatus-user-information-acquisition unit operable to acquire said apparatus-user information from said memory unit;
  - a memory-card-user-information-acquisition unit operable to acquire from said memory card main-memory-card-user information that identifies the main user of said memory card;
  - 10 a user-information-comparison unit operable to compare said apparatus-user information and main-memory-card-user information, and to output the comparison result; and
  - an output unit operable to output a specific output based on said comparison result.
2. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 wherein:
  - 20 said output unit outputs information indicating no match when said apparatus-user information does not match said main-memory-card-user information.
3. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 2 wherein:
  - 25 said output unit outputs information of the main user of the memory card when said comparison result indicates there is not a match.
4. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
  - a memory-card-contents-list-information-acquisition unit operable to

acquire information showing a list of the data contents stored on said memory card, and wherein:

    said output unit outputs information showing said list of data contents acquired by said memory-card-contents-list-information-acquisition unit when said comparison result indicates a match.

5. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 4 such that when said memory card is partitioned into a plurality of areas and memory-card-user information, which is the information of the main 10 users of each area, is related to each of the areas:

    said user-information-comparison unit compares said apparatus-user information with the memory-card-user information of each said area;

    said memory-card-contents-list-information-acquisition unit acquires information showing a list of data contents from the area corresponding 15 to the memory-card-user information whose comparison result was a match; and

    said output unit outputs information showing the list of data contents acquired by said memory-card-contents-list-information-acquisition unit.

20. 6. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 wherein; output from said output unit is performed when data on said memory card can be accessed.

7. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further 25 comprising a log-information-writing unit operable to write log information containing specific information including said apparatus-user information on said memory card when said comparison result indicates there is no match.

8. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 7 wherein said log information further includes information related to the contents on said memory card that have been accessed.

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9. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 7 further comprising:

a memory-card-contents-list-information-acquisition unit operable to acquire information showing a list of data contents stored on said memory card, and wherein:

said output unit outputs information indicating that a log will be created of access of the memory card; and

said log-information-writing unit writes said log information after said memory-card-contents-list-information-acquisition unit acquires information showing a list of data contents stored on said memory card.

10. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a function-restriction unit operable to perform a process of lowering the function of the memory card reading/writing apparatus based on said comparison result.

11. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 10 wherein the process performed by said function-restriction unit includes at least turning OFF the display backlight, lowering the brightness of the display, lowering the processing speed of the CPU (Central Processing Unit), overlaying specific display data, or outputting a specific sound.

12. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 wherein:

said memory-card-user-information-acquisition unit acquires sub-memory-card-user information from said memory card that identifies users of said memory card that are different than said main-memory-card-user information, and

5       said user-information-comparison unit compares said apparatus-user information with said sub-memory-card-user information, and outputs a comparison result.

13. A memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further  
10 comprising:

    a user-information-generation unit operable to receive input of new main-memory-card-user information when said comparison result is a match; and

15     a memory-card-user-information-writing unit operable to write the new main-memory-card-user information that was input on said memory card.

14. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 13 wherein  
20 said user-information-generation unit selectively inputs new main-memory-card-user information from sub-memory-card-user information that identifies users of said memory card and that differs from said main-memory-card-user information that was acquired by said memory-card-information-acquisition unit.

25     15. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 13 wherein  
    said user-information-generation unit receives information indicating  
    that the user is not limited for the new main-memory-card-user  
    information.

16. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a memory-card-user-information-writing unit operable to write said apparatus-user information on said memory card as the new  
5 main-memory-card-user information when said comparison results is not a match and when said main-memory-card-user information cannot be specified.

17. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further  
10 comprising:

a user-information-generation unit operable to saving in memory apparatus-user information that is already registered as old-apparatus-user information when new-apparatus-user information is registered; and wherein

15 said user-information-comparison unit further compares said old-apparatus-user information with the main-memory-card-user information when the comparison result of the new-apparatus-user information and said main-memory-card-user information is not a match.

20 18. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 17 comprising a memory-card-user-information-writing unit operable to write said new-apparatus-user information on said memory card as the main-memory-card-user information when the comparison result of said old-apparatus-user information and main-memory-card-user information  
25 is a match.

19. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 wherein said output unit is a mail-transmission unit operable to send e-mail to

an e-mail address that is included in said main-memory-card-user information when said comparison result is no match.

20. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 19 wherein  
5 said e-mail contains information about the user of said memory card reading/writing apparatus.

21. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 20 wherein  
said user information contains address information of the user.

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22. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 20 further comprising:

a GPS (Global Positioning System); wherein  
said user information contains current position information that is  
15 obtained from said GPS.

23. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

a mail-receiving unit operable to receive e-mail and to acquire  
20 apparatus-user information from the received e-mail that identifies the  
user of the apparatus that sent the e-mail;

a user-information-comparison unit operable to compare said  
apparatus-user information acquired by the received e-mail and said  
main-memory-card-user information, and to output the comparison  
25 result; and

an access-control unit operable to control access of said memory card  
based on said comparison result.

24. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 23 wherein said access-control unit controls access of said memory card based on conditions of use that are included in said e-mail.

5 25. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 24 wherein said access-control unit manages the period of time said memory card can be used based on said conditions of use.

10 26. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 24 wherein said access-control unit manages the number of times said memory card can be used based on said conditions of use.

27. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 24 further comprising:

15 a memory unit operable to store apparatus-user information that identifies the user of said memory card reading/writing apparatus;  
an apparatus-user-information-acquisition unit operable to acquire said apparatus-user information from said memory unit; and  
20 a memory-card-user-information-writing unit operable to rewrite main-memory-card-user information on said memory card with said apparatus-user information based on said conditions of use.

28. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:

25 a use-authorization-information-generation unit operable to generate use-authorization information that includes the apparatus-user information acquired by said apparatus-user-information-acquisition unit and the conditions of use of the memory card that can be accessed

by the apparatus at the transmission destination; and

a mail-transmission unit operable to send said use-authorization information to said apparatus at the transmission destination.

5        29. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 28 wherein said conditions of use judge whether or not said memory card can be accessed.

10        30. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 28 wherein said conditions of use include the period of time the memory card can be used.

15        31. The memory card reading/writing apparatus of claim 28 wherein said conditions of use include the number of times the memory card can be used.

32. An access method of a memory card reading/writing apparatus that is capable of accessing data recorded on a memory card and comprising:

20        acquiring apparatus-user information that identifies the user of said memory card reading/writing apparatus from memory unit storing said apparatus-user information;

      acquiring from said memory card main-memory-card-user information that identifies the main user of said memory card;

25        comparing said apparatus-user information and main-memory-card-user information;

      outputting the comparison result; and

      outputting a specific output based on said comparison result.

33. A program executed by a memory card reading/writing apparatus that is capable of accessing data recorded on a memory card and comprising:

5       acquiring apparatus-user information that identifies the user of said memory card reading/writing apparatus from memory unit storing said apparatus-user information;

      acquiring from said memory card main-memory-card-user information that identifies the main user of said memory card;

10      comparing said apparatus-user information and main-memory-card-user information;

      outputting the comparison result; and

      outputting a specific output based on said comparison result.

15      34. Storage medium possible to be read by a computer storing a program executed by a memory card reading/writing apparatus that is capable of accessing data recorded on a memory card and comprising:

      acquiring apparatus-user information that identifies the user of said memory card reading/writing apparatus from memory unit storing said apparatus-user information;

      acquiring from said memory card main-memory-card-user information that identifies the main user of said memory card;

      comparing said apparatus-user information and main-memory-card-user information;

25      outputting the comparison result; and

      outputting a specific output based on said comparison result.